

SECRET TELEPOUCH 14 NOVEMBER 1968

TO - C/EUR, COB/FRANKFURT, COB/MUNICH, COB/HAMBURG,

COS/GERMANY

FROM - COB/BERLIN

EGB-24,416

INTEL/CALL/CALLIKAK

SUPDATA - PARAGRAPHS 1 THROUGH 4 AND 6 ARE FROM CALLIKAK

COVERAGE OF THE VON WEDEL AND STANGE LINES. PARA 5

IS BASED ON REMARKS MADE TO ☐ PARA

7 IS FROM ☐ NO RELEASE TO LIAISON.

FILED - 141720Z

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCES METHOD EXEMPTION 3B2E
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2005

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REPORT CLASS SECRET NO FOREIGN DISSEM

COUNTRY - EAST GERMANY/WEST GERMANY

DOI - 27 OCTOBER - 12 NOVEMBER 1968

SUBJECT - RENEWED EAST GERMAN EFFORT TO OBTAIN
RELEASE OF HEINZ FELFE

ACQ - GERMANY, BERLIN /2-12 NOVEMBER 1968/ EGB-24,416

SOURCE - PARAGRAPHS 1 THROUGH 4 AND 6 FROM INTERCEPTED
COMMUNICATIONS. PARAGRAPH 5 FROM A MEDIUM-LEVEL
WEST GERMAN OFFICIAL WITH INFLUENTIAL CONNECTIONS IN
BONN. PARAGRAPH 7 FROM A SOURCE WITH ACCESS TO PRINCIPAL
SENAT OFFICIALS.

SUMMARY - DURING THE FIRST WEEK OF NOVEMBER 1968
THE EAST GERMANS MADE A RENEWED EFFORT TO OBTAIN THE RELEASE OF
CONVICTED SOVIET SPY HEINZ FELFE. THIS TOOK THE FORM OF
A PRIVATE MEETING BETWEEN WOLFGANG VOGEL, EAST GERMAN
PRISONER EXCHANGE ATTORNEY AND HERBERT WEHNER, SPD VICE
CHAIRMAN AND MINISTER ^{FOR ALL GERMAN AFFAIRS} SN79 4&37 6:\$-11-84. THE PURPOSE

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OF MEETING WAS TO ARRANGE FOR WEST GERMAN PROTESTANT AND CATHOLIC CHURCH PRESSURE ON CHANCELLOR KIESINGER TO OBTAIN FELFE'S RELEASE. THE CHANCELLOR'S PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE, RICHARD VON WEIZSAECKER, PRESIDENT OF THE GERMAN EVANGELICAL CHURCH COUNCIL, WAS TO SERVE AS THE INTERMEDIARY TO KIESINGER. ACCORDING TO VOGEL, THE PRISONER EXCHANGE PROGRAM WILL BE TERMINATED IN MID-NOVEMBER UNLESS AGREEMENT FOR FELFE'S RELEASE IS OBTAINED. THE VOGEL/WEHNER DISCUSSIONS TOOK PLACE DESPITE THE FACT THAT CHANCELLOR KIESINGER HAD ALREADY SCHEDULED A MEETING ON THE PRISONER EXCHANGE PROBLEM FOR 15 NOVEMBER. ACCORDING TO LUDWIG REHLINGER, THE WEST GERMAN GOVERNMENT'S PRISONER EXCHANGE BROKER, A HIGH-LEVEL DECISION ON THE EAST GERMAN ULTIMATUM IS TO BE MADE WITHIN A FEW DAYS. END OF SUMMARY.

1. ON 3 NOVEMBER 1968, WOLFGANG VOGEL MET WITH HERBERT WEHNER AT THE WEST BERLIN HOME OF CARL-GUSTAV SVINGEL FOR A PRIVATE DISCUSSION OF THE PRISONER EXCHANGE NEGOTIATIONS. //FIELD COMMENT - THE SUBSTANCE OF THEIR CONVERSATION IS NOT KNOWN AND IT IS UNCLEAR WHETHER THE MEETING WAS INITIATED BY VOGEL OR WEHNER. SVINGEL, A

SWEDISH NATIONAL, REPRESENTS THE SWEDISH NATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE LUTHERAN WORLD ORGANIZATION AND ON EARLIER OCCASIONS HAS ARRANGED MEETINGS BETWEEN WEHNER AND VOGEL. SEE OGA-785.//

2. ON 2 AND 4 NOVEMBER, VOGEL DISCUSSED THE STATUS OF PRISONER EXCHANGE NEGOTIATIONS WITH WEST BERLIN ATTORNEY REYMAR VON WEDEL, AN OFFICIAL OF THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH. DURING THE DISCUSSION, VOGEL TOLD VON WEDEL THAT HIS EAST GERMAN "SPONSORS" HAD ISSUED A NEW ULTIMATUM TERMINATING ALL FURTHER PRISONER RELEASES AFTER THOSE SCHEDULED FOR 6, 13 AND 14 NOVEMBER IF NO AGREEMENT FOR FELFE'S RELEASE WERE OBTAINED. HE URGED VON WEDEL TO ARRANGE A PRIVATE MEETING BETWEEN EVANGELICAL BISHOP KURT SCHARF AND CHANCELLOR KURT GEORG KIESINGER DURING THE LATTER'S APPEARANCE IN BERLIN DURING THE CDU PARTY CONGRESS IN AN EFFORT TO OBTAIN THE CHANCELLOR'S APPROVAL OF FELFE'S RELEASE. SCHARF AGREED WITH THIS APPROACH AND MADE ARRANGEMENTS THROUGH RICHARD VON WEIZSAECKER TO SEE THE CHANCELLOR BEFORE HE LEFT BERLIN ON 7 NOVEMBER. //IFIELD COMMENT - FOR OTHER INFORMATION ON PRISONER RELEASE

NEGOTIATIONS SEE EGB-24302 AND EGN 3863.// THE MEETING WAS LATER CANCELLED, APPARENTLY BECAUSE OF THE CHANCELLOR'S ILLNESS.

3. IN A CONVERSATION ABOUT 2 NOVEMBER, SVINGEL TOLD VON WEDEL THAT THE AMERICANS WERE NOT IN THE LEAST OPPOSED TO FELFE'S RELEASE, AND THAT WEHNER WILL NOT KEEP QUIET IF IT IS REFUSED. HE ADDED THAT KIESINGER IS IN NO POSITION TO RESIST PRESSURE ON THE MATTER.

4. VOGEL ALSO ENLISTED CATHOLIC SUPPORT FOR SCHARF'S AND VON WEDEL'S APPROACH TO KIESINGER. WHEN WEST BERLIN ATTORNEY JUERGEN STANGE ACCIDENTALLY LEARNED OF THE PROJECTED CHURCH INITIATIVE, HE IMMEDIATELY PASSED THIS INFORMATION TO ALL-GERMAN AFFAIRS MINISTRY OFFICIAL LUDWIG REHLINGER, WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR SUPERVISING PRISONER EXCHANGE ACTIVITIES. REHLINGER WAS OPPOSED TO THE CHURCHES' BECOMING INVOLVED AGAIN AND WAS ANXIOUS TO INFORM HIS BONN MINISTRY BEFORE IT WAS APPROACHED BY REPRESENTATIVES OF EITHER CHURCH.

5. SUBSEQUENTLY, IN A PRIVATE CONVERSATION ON 8 NOVEMBER, REHLINGER CONFIRMED THAT THE EAST GERMANS

HAD INDEED ISSUED A NEW ULTIMATUM MAKING ALL FURTHER PRISONER RELEASES CONTINGENT ON FELFE'S RELEASE. HE SAID THAT A DECISION ''AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL'' WOULD BE MADE WITHIN THE NEXT FEW DAYS. REHLINGER FELT THAT FELFE'S RELEASE WOULD BE TANTAMOUNT TO GIVING IN TO BLACKMAIL, BUT THAT THE PRESSURE BEING EXERTED ON THE GOVERNMENT BY THE CATHOLIC AND PROTESTANT CHURCHES MIGHT MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE TO AVOID SUCH A STEP. HE FELT PERSONALLY THAT THE ULTIMATUM WAS MERELY A SOVIET-INSPIRED EAST GERMAN BLUFF WHICH SHOULD BE CALLED. HE ADDED THAT AFTER A COUPLE MONTHS, THE EAST GERMANS ''WILL COME BACK IN A MORE REASONABLE FRAME OF MIND.'' HE WAS DEPRESSED, HOWEVER, #THAT THE COMPLICATED NEGOTIATIONS INVOLVED IN THE ''CHILDREN'S RANSOM'' PHASE OF THE PRISONER EXCHANGES WOULD BE AFFECTED.

6. IN A 12 NOVEMBER CONVERSATION WITH STANGE, REHLINGER COMPLAINED THAT WEHNER HAD BEEN BEHIND THE ENTIRE EFFORT OF ATTEMPTING TO GET CHURCH PRESSURE ON KIESINGER FOR FELFE'S RELEASE.

7. AN INTERESTING ASPECT OF THESE NEGOTIATIONS IS THEIR TIMING. ON 3 NOVEMBER, I.E., THE DATE OF THE

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VOGEL-WEHNER MEETING, THE BERLIN SENATOR
FOR FEDERAL AFFAIRS, DIETRICH SPANGENBERG, TOLD STANGE IN
CONFIDENCE THAT HE HAD LEARNED FROM WEHNER A FEW DAYS
EARLIER THAT ALL THOSE INVOLVED IN THE PRISONER EXCHANGE
WERE SCHEDULED TO MEET WITH THE CHANCELLOR ON 15 NOVEMBER.
THIS MEETING HAD BEEN ARRANGED BY STATE SECRETARY VON UND
ZU GUTTENBERG THE DAY THE CHANCELLOR LEFT FOR SPAIN.

8. //FIELD COMMENT - THE INFORMATION IN THIS REPORT
SUGGESTS THAT WEHNER AND VOGEL WERE SO CONCERNED ABOUT
THE POSSIBILITY OF A NEGATIVE DECISION ON FELFE THAT THEY
WERE ATTEMPTING TO PERSUADE THE CHRUCHES TO PUT PRESSURE
ON THE CHANCELLOR IN ADVANCE OF HIS DECISION.//

9. FIELD DISSEM - USBER /ALSO SENT BONN/.
REPORT CLASS SECRET NO FOREIGN DISSEM

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